

Message Text

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62

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-20 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01

DRC-01 AID-20 /113 W

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R 071805Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3517

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KINGSTON 4167

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, JM, GY

SUBJ: VISIT OF FORBES BURNHAM

1. FORBES BURNHAM'S NOV 28 - DEC 4 UNOFFICIAL VISIT TO JAMAICA RECEIVED SCANTY ATTENTION IN THE JAMAICAN PRESS. THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE VISIT WERE HIS APPEARANCE AT THE CEREMONIES MARKING THE LAUNCHING OF MANLEY'S NEW BOOK AND A PRESS INTERVIEW ON NOV 30.

2. AT THE FORMER, BURNHAM DESCRIBED MANLEY AS ONE OF THE OUT-STANDING FIGURES IN THE CARIBBEAN.

3. AT THE PRESS INTERVIEW, BURNHAM CAME ON STRONG ON HIS STAND ON OBEAH STRESSING THAT IT HAD BEEN MADE ILLEGAL BY "COLONIALISTIC, IMPERIALISTIC GOVERNMENTS WHO WERE CONCERNED ONLY TO DE-HUMANIZE AFRICAN SLAVES..." BRUNHAM SAID THAT HE WAS SIMPLY REMOVING FROM THE STATUES THE OFFENCE CALLED PRACTICING OBEAH BUT THAT IT WOULD EMPHATICALLY CONTINUE TO BE ILLEGAL FOR PEOPLE TO OBTAIN GAIN BY PROMISING TO DO THINGS WITH OBEAH THAT THEY CANNOT FULFILL. HE THEN PROCEEDED TO DRAW PARALLELS BETWEEN THE "PAGAN" RITES OF CHRISTIANITY AND AFRICAN CUSTOM, WHICH MANY JAMAICANS FOUND OFFENSIVE.

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4. BURNHAM SAID THAT HE AND MANLEY WERE HAVING INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS ON THE FUEL CRISIS, THE EEC, AND BAUXITE. HE SAID THAT HE COULD NOT SEE ANY GREAT CHANGES COMING IN THE GUYANESE CONSTITUTION IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE - GUYANA SAW A ONE-PARTY GOVERNMENT, BUT A MULTI-PARTY POLITICAL SYSTEM AND IT WOULD REMAIN SO. HE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT AN EVENTUAL UNION OF CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES - THE COUNTRIES WERE NOT YET READY FOR IT.

5. COMMENT: ASIDE FROM THE SATISFACTION THOSE SUCH AS DUDLEY THOMPSON MIGHT HAVE GAINED FROM BRINING BURNHAM TO JAMAICA, HIS VISIT MADE LITTLE IMPACT.
HEWITT

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Message Attributes

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